

The darkest hour is only an hour.

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The Baptist Examiner

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"To the law and to the Testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."—Isaiah 8:20

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ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1979

WHOLE NUMBER 2239

THE 'SEPARATE STATE' THEORY

ISAAC WATTS
(1674-1748)

There are several places of Scripture in the Old Testament, as well as in the New, which may be most naturally and properly construed to signify the existence of the soul in a Separate State after the body is dead; but since they do not carry with them such plain evidence, or forcible proof, and may possibly be interpreted to another sense, I shall not long insist upon them: however it may not be amiss just to mention a few of them, and pass away.

"Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory: my flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever" (Psalm 73:24,26). In these verses "receiving to glory" seems immediately to follow a "guidance" through this world; and when "the flesh and heart" of the Psalmist should "fail him" in death, God continued to be "his portion for ever;" God would "receive" him to himself as such a "portion," and thereby he gave

"strength and courage to his heart" even in a dying hour. It would be a very old and unnatural opposition of this text to interpret it only of the "resurrection," thus,



ISAAC WATTS

"Thou shalt guide me by thy counsel through this life, and after the longer interval of some thousand years, thou wilt receive me to glory."

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit to God that gave it" (Eccles. 12:7). It is confessed the word "spirit" in the Hebrew is the same with "breath," and is represented in some places of Scripture as the spring of animal life to the body; yet it is evident in many other places, the word "spirit" signifies the conscious principle in man, or the intelligent being, which knows and reasons, perceives and acts. The Scripture speaks of being "grieved in spirit" (Isa. 54:6). "Of rejoicing in spirit" (Luke 10:21). "The spirit of a man knoweth the" (Continued on page 3, column 1)

THE BIBLE

C. H. SPURGEON
(1834-1892)

(PART II)

But let me say one thing, before I pass on to the second point. If this be the Word of God, what will become of some of you who have not read it for them last month? "Month, sir! I have not read it for this year." Ay, there are some of you who have not read it at all. Most people treat the Bible very politely. They have a small pocket volume, neatly bound; they put a white pocket handkerchief round



C. H. SPURGEON

it and carry it to their places of worship; when they get home, they lay it up in a drawer till next Sunday morning; then it comes out again for a little bit of a treat, and goes to chapel; that is all the poor Bible gets in the way of an airing. That is your style of entertaining this heavenly messenger. There is dust enough on some of your Bibles to write "damnation" with your fingers. There are some of you who have not turned over your Bibles for a long, long, long while, and what think you? I tell you blunt words. What will God say at last? When you shall come before Him, He shall (Continued on page 6, column 4)

and caution. The unbelief of Thomas was unreasonable and sinful in a degree beyond expression. Why did he not believe the united testimony of the other apostles? He should have received the testimony of any one of them. Unbelief justly exposed him to eternal condemnation. Has Thomas a license for unbelief, more than any other of the human race? Must he not be liable to condemnation on the same ground with the rest of mankind? Must he be satisfied in his own whims with respect to the evidence of this fact? "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe." Did ever any infidel express a more unreasonable demand for the evidence of Christ's resurrection, and the truth of the Christian religion? The demands of sceptics are moderate and sober compared to this intemperance of unbelief. The most unreasonable of them demand only that a particular revelation of the Gospel should be made to every man. This falls far short of the extravagance of unreasonableness of the unbelief of Thomas.

But there is wisdom in this madness. If Thomas is unreasonable (Continued on page 5, column 1)

THE RISEN CHRIST AND THOMAS, THE DISCIPLE

ALEXANDER CARSON
(1776-1844)

"But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came" (John 20:24). It is remarkable that one of the disciples should have been absent from the assembly on such an interesting occasion as when Christ appeared among them after His resurrection. What was the cause of his absence it would be worse than useless to conjecture. But the intention of Providence in it is obvious. It was to display the natural unbelief, as to the things of God, that is in the heart of man; and to teach us the kind of evidence that God accounts sufficient for His saving Truth.

Why was one of the disciples absent? Why was this disciple Thomas? The narrative itself affords an answer to both questions. Divine providence intended to give us a specimen of unbelief even in His own people. Thomas was peculiarly incredulous; therefore he was the person fitted to act the part designed for him on this occasion. If Thomas was afterwards convinced, there is no room left for captiousness to allege that the fact of Christ's resurrection was received by the disciples on slight grounds, without sufficient evidence

YOU CAN DO IT, TOO!

A frog got caught in a deep rut, so the fable goes. In spite of the help of his friends, he could not get out. They finally left him there in despair. The next day one of his friends saw him hopping about outside the rut as chipper as could be.

"What are you doing here?" the friend asked, "I thought you couldn't get out."

"I couldn't," the frog replied, "but a truck came along and I had to get out."

Some of us are living beneath our capabilities. Because we cannot do great things, we are inclined not to do anything. Every Christian has at least one gift or capacity with which he can glorify God. Whatever it is, he should use it with all his heart.

—The Gospel Standard

GOD IS GOVERNING THE NATIONS

ARTHUR W. PINK
(1886 - 1952)

"Repent ye and believe the Gospel" (Mark 1:15): "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21). Unless there be both repentance and faith there is no forgiveness of sins for any soul, yet there are comparatively few passages in

ments, wherein terms are needlessly repeated and multiplied. Each passage of the Word must be interpreted in the light of and consistently with "the analogy of faith" (Rom. 12:6, Gk.)—the general tenor of Scripture—and none made exceptional to the general rule. Thus concerning the above references: where only "repentance" is mentioned "believing" is implied, and when "believing" is found alone "repentance" is presupposed. The same principle applies to all other subjects: for example, prayer. "Ask, and ye shall receive" (Matt. 7:7) is not to be taken without qualification: if we are to "receive" we must "ask" ARIGHT—believingly (Heb. 11:6), according to God's will (I John 5:14), in the name of Christ (John 14:13) and so on.

Our object in beginning with the above was to pave the way for an explanatory word on what was before us at the close of our last. Not a few have been puzzled over Jonah's positive and unqualified declaration "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (Jonah 3:4), for such an announcement of disaster appeared to hold out no hope of escape. This affords a striking example of the necessity for interpreting each passage in the light of and in harmony with (Continued on page 5, column 3)



ARTHUR W. PINK

which both of them are EXPRESSLY MENTIONED. In Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; and 17:30 "repentance" alone is inculcated; in John 3:15; Romans 1:16 and 10:4 only "believing" is specified. Why is this? Because the Scriptures are not written as lawyers draw up docu-

HALLIMAN GIVES REPORT ON MISSION FINANCES

By FRED T. HALLIMAN
Missionary To New Guinea

Dear Friends,

Greetings to each of you once again. We trust that God continues to bless each of you and supply your every need.

As I write this I have reason to rejoice and wish to share these blessings with you. As you will recall in my last article I set forth the financial status of the mission work in Papua New Guinea, and that was as of the first of July this year and we were running \$6,000.00 in the red.

I wish that I could tell you in this article that we have received enough since that article to erase all indebtedness, but I cannot. However, I am so happy to report that God's people have opened their hearts and purses and we have received enough this month to erase \$2,000.00 of it.

It has been several years now since we have had any increase that amounted to much in our monthly offerings, and all along inflation plus the erosion of the American dollar on the foreign money exchange have plagued us. In order to operate so that the work can continue to grow we will have to have at least \$4,500.00 a month. This month we received \$6,500.00, which we believe is an indication that the Lord is going to impress His people to contribute so that we can completely erase all indebtedness, and then have the amount we need each month to carry the work on.

Beloved, this is a great encouragement to me, for it is an indication once again that God has heard and answered fervent prayer. One church in Texas sent \$1,068.69 and another in Ohio sent \$1,150.00. The next largest church offering came from a church in Kentucky with \$245.74. One individual in Florida sent \$440.00, another in Ohio \$250.00, one in North Carolina \$125.00; others, lots of others, sent lesser amounts but almost all that contributed increased their offerings above previous months.

On the list of offerings provided by my church I noted five new churches and seven individuals that contributed, who had not done so before. We earnestly pray that God will lay it on the hearts of these churches and individuals to send their offerings regularly, and also that He will raise up others to share in this burden as well as the blessings. Beloved, I ask nothing of you other than that you hold the rope for me while I go down into the well. The well is getting deeper, though, all the time and it is going to take more rope; so, if you folk will be faithful and steady and keep letting out the rope, I'll keep going deeper. I am not asking that you keep the rope so tight that it would appear that you are ready to pull me out, nor am I asking that you give me so much slack all of a sudden that I would wonder if you were there at all. But the thing that will encourage me most, is a steady and continuing letting out of it. There is no financial need too great but what our God is able to supply. Pray that God will make it possible for you to be able to give for this work, asking the Holy Spirit to lead you as to how much you should give, and then follow (Continued on page 4, column 5)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Milburn Cockrell

THE DOCTRINE OF HELL

(Preached on the Independent Baptist Hour August 19, 1979)

PART II

It is not possible to preach too much about Christ. But it is quite possible to preach too little about Hell. There is no mercy in keeping back from men the topic of Hell. It should be preached to all since it is one of the great truths of Christianity. All Bible believers should boldly and unhesitatingly maintain there is a Hell to shun and a Heaven to gain.

THE CHARACTER OF HELL

According to Jesus Christ, there are two primary characteristics of Hell. In Mark 9:46 He said it

was a place "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Men of earth cannot imagine anything more painful than the gnawing of worms (Acts 12:23) and the burning of fire upon the body of flesh. The teaching of Christ on Hell here is in harmony with the teaching of Isaiah in the Old Testament. The prophet wrote: "And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all

flesh" (Isa. 66:24). I, for one, do not view either the worms or the fire here as metaphors. I take them in their literal sense.

The teaching of Christ on Hell is in harmony with the view of the ancient Jews. This can be seen by some of the apocryphal writings. Judith 16:17 says: "Woe to the nation that rises up against my kindred: The Lord Almighty will take vengeance of them in the day of judgment, putting fire and worms in their flesh, and they shall feel them and weep forever." (Continued on page 2, column 1)

1978

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The Doctrine Of Hell

(Continued from page one)

Ecclesiasticus 7:16-17 says: "Num-
ber not thyself among the multi-
tude of sinners, but remember the
wrath will not tarry long. Humble
thy soul greatly, for the vengeance
of the ungodly is fire and worms."
These verses are not inspired by
God, although they do reveal the
views of the Jewish people.

Modern students of the Word
have a hard time accepting the
words of Christ in their literal
sense. They say these things just
simply cannot be. They would say
to me, "Surely you do not believe
in immortal worms eating away at
a man's fleshly body in a literal,
burning Hell? Why no intelligent
theologian living today believes
any such foolishness!"

I reply that I believe exactly
what Jesus Christ said. When the
plain sense of the Scripture makes
sense, I seek no other sense. It
would be no more of a problem for
God to make an immortal worm
than an immortal soul. What could
be more tormenting to a man in
Hell, who still possesses his soul
and body, than maggots eating on
his flesh day and night, always
eating and never devouring the
body. If the undying worms are
a metaphor as some say, then it
describes a greater misery than is
felt by a living man who feels his
body eaten by maggots.

Jesus Christ not only said Hell
was a place of undying worms,
but He also said it was a place of
fire. I believe He meant literal,
physical, material fire. In Matthew
5:22 He declared: "... but whoso-
ever shall say, Thou fool, shall be
in danger of hell fire." In Matthew
18:9 He again made reference to
"Hell fire." In the historical inci-
dent about the rich man, He dis-
closed that the rich man cried
out: "I am tormented in this
flame" (Luke 16:24). In the par-
able of the wheat and tares He
said the children of the Devil are
to be burned in "a furnace of fire"
(Matt. 13:24). Jesus Christ never
told a lie. If He said there is fire in
Hell, then there is fire in Hell.

The other Bible writers often
spoke about there being fire in
Hell. Moses wrote that Jehovah
said: "For a fire is kindled in mine
anger, and shall burn unto the low-

est hell, and shall consume the
earth with her increase, and set
on fire the foundations of the moun-
tains." The psalmist, speaking
of the wicked, declared: "Upon the
wicked he shall rain snares, fire
and brimstone, and an horrible
tempest: This shall be the portion
of their cup" (Ps. 11:6). Isaiah
wrote of "everlasting burnings"
(Isa. 33:14). James mentioned the
"fire of hell" (Jas. 3:6). The apos-
tle John spoke in the Revelation of
a "lake of fire" (Rev. 19:20; 20:10,
14-15; 21:8). Since I believe the
Bible is literally true, I have no
choice but to believe in a literal,
burning Hell.

"Come on, preacher, surely you
do not think that people with literal
bodies will be cast into Hell, do
you?" Yes, I most assuredly do.
Matthew 10:28 tells us that both
soul and body will be cast into Hell.
In Mark 9:43-49 Jesus spoke of
literal hands, literal feet, and lit-
eral eyes being in the bodies of
those cast into Hell. "And if thy
hand offend thee, cut it off: it is
better for thee to enter into life
maimed, than having two hands to
go into hell, into the fire that
never shall be quenched. Where
their worm dieth not, and the fire
is not quenched. And if thy foot
offend thee, cut it off: it is better
for thee to enter half into life, than
having two feet to be cast into hell,
into the fire that never shall be
quenched. Where their worm dieth
not, and the fire is not quenched.
And if thine eye offend thee, pluck
it out: it is better for thee to en-
ter into the kingdom of God with
one eye, than having two eyes to
be cast into hell fire: Where their
worm dieth not, and the fire is not
quenched. For every one shall be
salted with fire, and every sacrifice
shall be salted with salt."

Please observe carefully the last
words in the quote from Mark
chapter 9: "Salted with fire." Fire
to the wicked in Hell will be what
salt is to meat on earth. Salt on
earth keeps meat from corruption.
Even so, the fire of Hell will tor-
ture and distress evil men, yet it
will preserve their being with all
their powers and faculties. The
fire of Hell, instead of annihilating
their bodies, will preserve them.
The Divine wrath will preserve
them from annihilation in order
that their punishment may con-
tinue.

The Bible speaks of a resurrec-
tion unto damnation, a resurrection
of the unjust. This means that the
wicked shall have their bodies

BRIEF NOTES

Please be understanding. Due to
being away in revival meetings al-
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The Meadow Creek Baptist
Church of Meadow Creek, W. Va.,
and Pastor Leroy Pack will con-
duct revival services Sept. 17-23.
Elder Gerald Price of Griffin, Ga.,
will be the speaker. Services will
be nightly at 7:00 p.m. On Sun-
day morning of the 23rd lunch will
be served at the home of one of
the church members. The church
invites all within driving distance
to attend these services.

Our special Tuesday night Bible
classes at Calvary Baptist Church,
Ashland, Ky., will begin Sept. 11
and continue until May of 1980.
This year Bro. James Hobbs will
teach Bible Geography and the
editor Baptist Church History.
Classes will begin at 7:30 p.m.
each week. They are free and all
are urged to attend. They are good
for ministers and church mem-
bers.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist
Church of Warren, Ohio, and Mis-
sionary Keith Schuetz will con-
duct special services Sept. 12-15.
Services will be nightly at 7:00
p.m. with Elder Oscar Mink of
Crestline, Ohio, doing the preach-
ing. The church invites all within
driving distance to attend.

ARTICLES OF FAITH IN 1841 OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, GRIFFIN, GA.

Below are the Articles of Faith approved by the charter members
of the First Baptist Church of Griffin, Ga., March 1841. They offer
no help for Arminian Baptists.

1. We believe in the one, only true and living God.
2. We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are
the Word of God, and the only rule of faith and practice.
3. We believe in the doctrine of eternal and particular election.
4. We believe in the doctrine of original sin.
5. We believe in man's impotency to recover himself from the fallen
state he is in by nature of his own free will and ability.
6. We believe that sinners are justifiable in the sight of God only by
the inspired righteousness of Jesus Christ.
7. We believe that the elect will be called, regenerated and sanctified
by the Holy Ghost.
8. We believe that the Saints shall persevere in grace and never finally
fall away.
9. We believe that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of
Jesus Christ and that true believers are the only subjects of these
ordinances. And we believe the true mode of Baptism is by im-
mersion.
10. We believe in the resurrection of the dead and a final judgment.
11. We believe that the punishment of the wicked will be eternal and
the joys of the righteous everlasting.
12. We believe that no minister has the right to the administration of
the ordinances except such as have been under the imposition of
hands by the Presbytery.

raised up again. They will be
raised up and made to endure the
torture of Hell without consuming.
Did not God in mercy preserve the
bodies of Shadrach, Meshech, and
Abednego in the burning furnace of
Nebuchadnezzar? And cannot His
power do the same thing under the
influence of His justice as well as
of His mercy? Does not the Bible
say that God will "show his wrath"
and "make his power known" upon
"the vessels of wrath" (Rom. 9:

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By

THIELEMAN J. VAN BRAGHT

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called "The Book of Baptist Martyrs."

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22)? The God who kept the burn-
ing bush Moses saw from con-
suming itself can keep alive bodies
covered by worms and burning in
the fires of Hell.

THE DESCRIPTION OF HELL

The Bible goes to great length
to describe Hell. It is called a
place of darkness. With reference
to the future suffering of false
teachers, Jude said: "... to whom
is reserved the blackness of dark-
ness for ever" (Jude 13). Bildad
said of the wicked: "He shall be
driven from light into darkness,
and chased out of the world" (Job
18:18). Proverbs 20:20 reads:
"Whoso curseth his father or his
mother, his lamp shall be put out
in obscure darkness." Ecclesiastes
6:4 tells how a dying man departs
"in darkness." Jesus Christ spoke
of a place of "outer darkness"
where there was "weeping and
gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 22:13;
25:30).

Wicked men serve the Prince of
Darkness; they engage in the works
of darkness. It is only fitting and
right then that they be reserved
to the darkness of Hell. Those in
Hell are eternally shut out of the
kingdom of light and deprived of
the inheritance of the saints in
light. They will spend their eter-
nity in a place of extreme dark-
ness, darkness to the last degree,
darkness that can be felt, a dark-
ness without the least ray of light
or hope. How uncomfortable and
frightful is the dismal and dark
dungeon God has prepared for all
unbelievers! How dreadful to con-
template an eternal existence in
"a land of darkness, as darkness it-
self," a place "where the light is
as darkness" (Job 10:22).

everlasting fire" (Matt. 25:41).
II Thessalonians 1:9 speaks of some
"who shall be punished with ever-
lasting destruction from the pres-
ence of the Lord, and from the
glory of his power."

The Bible speaks of Hell being a
place of destruction. "Hell and des-
truction" are mentioned together
in the Bible (Job 26:6; Prov. 15:11;
27:20). It is a place where both
body and soul are destroyed with
everlasting destruction, according
to Matthew 10:28. This is not the
extinction of soul and body, for you
cannot annihilate an immortal soul.
It is not the cessation of the body,
for the bodies of the unsaved are
to rise and suffer shame and con-
tempt (Dan. 12:2). The destruction
of Hell is not a destruction of being
but of bliss. The unsaved in Hell
are deprived of both joy and hap-
piness.

To make Hell the extinction of
being as religious liberals often do
is to make the teachings of Christ
void. Jesus Christ said of Judas:
"It had been good for that man if
he had not been born" (Matt. 26:
24). This verse makes no sense if
Hell is the cessation of man's be-
ing. To be in a state of non-ex-
istence or to be unborn is the
same. For a man to be extinct is
to be as if he were never born.
Therefore no comparison can be
made between the two. However
Christ did make a comparison be-
tween them, and He indicated that
after death Judas would be worse
off than before he was born. Judas
would be worse off only if he would
suffer in the fire of Hell at death.

THE CONDITION OF THOSE IN HELL

First, in describing the awful
condition which awaits a beast
worshiper, John penned these
words: "... He shall be tor-
mented with fire and brimstone
in the presence of the holy angels,
and in the presence of the Lamb"
(Rev. 14:10). Then he speaks of
"the smoke of their torment" in
verse 11. There is no reason to
spiritualize away the fire and brim-
stone any more than there is to
spiritualize away the angels men-
tioned in the same verse.

The Bible says in Luke 16:23-24:
"And in hell he lift up his eyes, be-
ing in torments, and seeth Abra-
ham afar off, and Lazarus in his
bosom. And he cried and said,
Father Abraham, have mercy on
me, and send Lazarus that he may
dip the tip of his finger in water,
and cool my tongue; for I am tor-
mented in this flame." Then in
verse 25 Abraham answers back
from Paradise: "Thou art torment-
ed." The rich man was promised
no relief. This will add to the tor-
ment of the wicked and make the
flames hotter, for everything in
Hell is tormenting.

Second, Hell is a place without
rest. In describing the condition
of the wicked in Hell John said:
"They have no rest day nor night"
(Rev. 14:11). Day and night is ex-
pressive of all time. The meaning
is that the fire of Divine wrath is
never quenched. The lost in Hell
(Continued on page 4, Col. 2)

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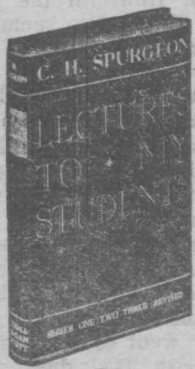
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'Separate State' ... (Continued from page one)

things of a man" (I Cor. 2:11). "There is a spirit in man," that is, a principle of understanding (Job 32:8). And "this spirit" both of the wicked and the righteous at death "returns to God" (Eccles. 12:7) to God who (as I hinted before) is the "Judge of all" in the world of spirits, probably to be further determined and disposed of, as to its state of reward or punishment.

"The righteous is taken away from the evil to come, he shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness" (Isa. 57:2). The soul of every one that walketh uprightly shall at death enter into a state of peace while his body rests in the bed of dust.

"And behold there talked with him," that is, with Jesus, "two men, which were Moses and Elias, who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem" (Luke 9:30, 31). I grant it possible that these might be mere visions which appeared to our blessed Saviour and His apostles; but it is a much more natural and obvious interpretation to suppose that the spirits of these two great men, whereof one was the institutor, and the other the reformer of the Jewish church, did really appear to Christ, who was the Reformer of the world, and the Institutor of the Christian church, and converse with Him about the important event of His death, and His return to Heaven. Perhaps the spirit of Elijah had his heavenly body with him there, since he never died, but was carried alive to Heaven; but Moses gave up his soul at the call of God when no man was near him, and his body was buried by God Himself. See II Kings 12:11 and Deuteronomy 34:1,5,6 and his spirit was probably made visible only by

an assumed vehicle for that purpose.

"Whoso heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death to life" (John 5:24). "This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man eat thereof and not die. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever" (John 6:47,50,51). "Whoso liveth and believeth in me, shall never die" (John 11:26) to which may be added the word of Christ to the woman of Samaria, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14). "He that hath the Son hath life" (I John 5:12). The argument I draw from these Scriptures is this: it is hardly to be supposed that our Saviour in this Gospel, and John in his first epistle imitating him, should speak such strong language concerning eternal life, actually given to and possessed by the believers of that day, if there must be an interruption of it by total death or sleep both of soul and body for almost two thousand years, that is, till the resurrection.

"And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:50). Those who deny a Separate State, suppose that Stephen here commits his spirit, or principle of human life, into the hands or care of Christ, because the "life" of a saint is said to be "hid with Christ in God," (Colos. 3:3, 4), that he might restore it at the resurrection, and raise him to life again. But I think this is an unnatural force put upon these words, contrary to their most obvious meaning, if we consider the context; for Stephen here had a vision of the "Son of Man or Christ Jesus, standing on the right hand of God," and "the glory of God" near him; see Acts 7:55,56. Whereupon Stephen being conscious of the existence of Christ in that glorious state, desired that he would receive his spirit, and take it to dwell with him in his Father's house; not to lie and sleep in Heaven, for "there is no night there," but to behold the glory of Christ according to the many promises that Christ had made to His disciples, that He "would go and prepare a place for them in His Father's house," and that they should be "with Him there to behold His glory," (John 14 and 17) which I shall have occasion to speak of afterward.

"And if Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness," (Rom. 8:10,11) that is, if Christ dwell in you by the sanctifying influence of His Spirit, it is true indeed, your body is mortal and must die, because it is doomed to death from the fall of Adam, on the account of sin, and because sinful principles still dwell in this fleshly body; but your soul or spirit "is life," or your "spirit lives" when the body is dead, and enjoys a life of happiness, because of the righteousness imputed to you, that is, your justification unto life (Rom. 5:17, 18,21). I know there are several other ways of construing the words of this verse by metaphors; but the plain and most natural antithesis which appears here between the death of



The Baptist Examiner

BIBLE STUDY LESSON

By WILLARD PYLE

Pastor — First Baptist Church of Naples Park, Florida

For September 16, 1979

Amos 1:13-2:1-3.

Intro.: Proverbs 14:34 reminds us, "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people." We see also, "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Further, no nation can long endure which is dominated by "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God," and lusts and laxity and that which sets aside the principles of the laws of God.

VERSE 13

"Thus saith the Lord." Amos prefaces all of his pronouncements of judgments against the nations by a "thus saith the Lord," so he speaks with authority and accuracy, not merely speculation or human evaluation. This is not his thoughts but God's truths. Would to God professing preachers would accredit all of their messages in the same way.

"For three transgressions of the children of Ammon, and for four." The same principle of judgment is used in each case, as God is true and righteous in all of His dealings. He is no respecter of persons. In each case sin had risen to the top of the cup and therefore had reached to the full. It had steadily climbed to the top of the kettle and had flowed over the top. In relation to Ammon, read Jude 3:12; Judges 11:12; I Samuel 11:

the body of a saint because of sin or guilt, and the continuance of the spirit or soul in a life of peace because of justification or righteousness, and then even when the body is dead, gives a pretty clear proof that this is the sense of the apostle. This is also further confirmed by the next verse, which promises the resurrection of the dead body in due time. "If the Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead," that is, God the Father, "shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." The spirit or soul of the saint lives without dying, because of its pardon of sin, and justification and sanctification, in the 10th verse; and the body (not the spirit or soul) shall be quickened or raised to life again, by the blessed Spirit of God which dwells in the saints (verse 11).

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. We in this tabernacle groan being burdened, not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life" (II Cor. 5:1,2,4). It is evident that this "house from heaven," this "building of God," is something which is like the "clothing" of a soul, divested of this "earthly tabernacle," (verses 1, 2) or it is the clothing of the whole person, body and soul, which would abrogate the state of "mortality" and "swallow it up in life" (verse 4). For though in verse 4 the apostle supposes that the soul doth not "desire" the death of the body, or that itself should be "unclothed," and therefore he would rather choose to have this state of blessed immortality "superinduced" on his body and soul, at once without dying, yet in the first verse he plainly means such a "house" in or from Heaven, or such a "clothing" which may come upon the soul immediately as soon as the "earthly house" or "tabernacle of his body is dissolved." And how dubious soever this may appear to those who read the chapter only thus far, yet the 8th verse, which supposes good men to be "present with Christ" when "absent from the body," determines the sense of (Continued on page 4, column 3)

11; II Kings 24:2; Jeremiah 40:14.

"I will not turn away the punishment thereof." Although God doesn't execute judgment on sin immediately, He never ignores or excuses sin. If in the case of Nineveh, a nation repents, God removes judgment (Jonah 3:10). Therefore a nation has been spared which was almost ripe for judgment. This is done primarily because of the saved in a nation (Matt. 5:13; Gen. 18:26). How much salt is in the United States? Could we be on the verge of this truth presented here in Amos?

"Because they have ripped up the woman with child of Gilead." Cruelty has always been one of the expressions of a corrupt heart. One is made sick as we read daily of the most diabolical actions of depraved men, and the manner in which these sins are dealt with in this country. God is judging Ammon for many types of sin but this is one at the top of the list; the lack of regard for women with child. Could it not be that many which would cringe at this are guilty of an equally serious crime, the crime of abortion! Is this not equally the taking of a life?

"That they might enlarge their border." This was done out of greed and selfishness in order to assure themselves of the finer things of life! This was one way to do away with over-population and probably like Hitler to bring forth a so-called super race. I believe there is a brainwashing in our own country, basically preparing for the same thing!

VERSE 14

"But I will kindle a fire in the wall of Rabbah, and it shall devour the palaces thereof." Notice, God is declared to be the Author of judgment. It does not come by accident. God lights the fire Himself. The matches He uses may vary but they are His matches used in judgment. They will not go out until judgment is carried out.

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shouts of the victorious armies are used. These attacks can come one after another or all together.

VERSE 15

"And their king shall go into captivity, he and his princes together." All of the planners and organizers, along with the supporters or those who voted for the sins just mentioned will feel the hand of judgment.

"Saith the Lord." The message has not been misunderstood, it is God's message.

CHAPTER 2, VERSE 1

"Thus saith the Lord." Neither the message nor the messenger is changed.

"For three transgressions of Moab, and for four." That which had produced such an avalanche of sin in the other countries had overflowed in a wider range and was affecting more and more. It seems that "the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord" (Psa. 2:1-3; Acts 4:26). The United States had better heed the warning to "follow not a multitude to do evil." The principle is the same in churches.

In relation to Moab read Judges 3:12; II Samuel 14:47.

"I will not turn away the punishment thereof." The wheels of judgment had already been set in motion and would roll forward until the end of the campaign was concluded. To think otherwise would only be to deceive oneself or be wishful thinking (Gal. 6:7). We live in a day of self-deception when preachers, so called, are misleading people laden with sin into thinking that God loves you, when in reality God is angry with the wicked (Psa. 7:11). It is repent or perish!

"Because he burned the bones of the king of Edom into lime." In order to show the absolute hatred of Moab for Edom they were not content until they had desecrated the grave of the king of Edom. It is indescribable how far man will go to manifest his hatred for his enemy. Along with this, since there are strange ideas about re-incarnation, this could have been done in order to keep this from happening, according to this view. When men forsake the ways of God, they follow the ways of the Devil who was a liar and a murderer from the beginning.

VERSE 2

"But I will send a fire upon Moab, and it shall devour the palace of Kirioth." As they are actively engaged in their fulfilling the desires of the flesh, I will come upon them unawares in righteous judgment and remove their leaders, and then the common people.

"And Moab shall die with tumult, with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet." Figures which describe the chaos and the confusion which shall exist in the day of judgment. Instead of the cries of victory and the joy of happy soldiers, there shall be the frightening cries of the enemies, like Indians who scalp their enemies.

VERSE 3

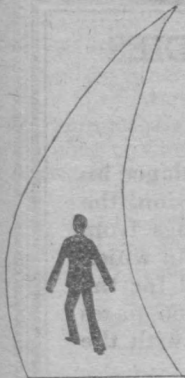
"And I will cut off the judge from the midst thereof, and will slay all the princes thereof with him." He that sits as lawgiver, and they who execute the law given will be judged equally and fully.

Conclusion: "Saith the Lord." The final authority for all judgment is the Sovereign God of the universe. How we need to bow to His authority and cry out, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord."

(EDITOR'S NOTE:—If you would like to write to Bro. Pyle expressing your appreciation for the lessons or ask him questions about his exposition of the Scripture his address is Rt. 11, Box 1198, Fort Myers, Fla. 33908.)

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The Baptist Examiner Forum

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

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"Please explain the person in Luke 8:11 who believes and falls away."—Kansas City, Kans.

JAMES HOBBS
Rt. 2, Box 182
McDermott, Ohio

PASTOR
Kings Addition
Baptist Church
South Shore, Ky.



The key words here are "these have no root." They represent the religious people who believe with the head, but do not have the Lord Jesus as their Saviour, or root. We have many people in the world who have been deceived by Satan into a head belief but not a heart felt knowledge of Jesus. These are like the people in I Corinthians 15:2, "... unless ye have believed in vain ..."

Without true regeneration, there is no hope, regardless of the profession made. Repentance and faith must be found in the person, thus John told the scribes and Pharisees to bring fruits worthy of repentance. "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3).

No matter how emotional a profession may be, if the person does not have the new birth he is a believer without root and he will not live.

OSCAR MINK
219 North Street
Crestline, Ohio
44827

Pastor
Mansfield
Missionary
Baptist Church
Mansfield, Ohio
44906



The person is a rootless, mock or superficial believer. Because of his adamant heart the seed (word) took no root, he is top heavy with head knowledge, he reels under the least winds of temptation, and is soon blown away by them. The true disciple is like a tree planted by the rivers of water, his roots go deeper and deeper in the living Word. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him: Rooted and built up in Him, and established in the

faith ..." (Col. 2:6-7). Satan knows how to twist, turn, and distort the Bible so as to make it compatible with carnal reason, and once a person is made to believe he has the power to determine his own eternal destiny it gives him much joy. But the joy is euphoric and short-lived, for it fades with their rapid progression toward apostasy. Christ used many parables in His teaching, and the one from which our text is taken is one of six which are recorded in all three Gospels. Could it be Christ is saying by this tri-record to all professors, "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure?" (II Pet. 1:10).

The Doctrine Of Hell

(Continued from page two)
will have no rest from sin, Satan, and suffering; no intervals of terror, torment, or tears. There are no coffee breaks, or vacations, or holidays in Hell. Here on earth some rests come to the sufferer. The prisoner sleeps in his cell. The sick patient in the hospital is relieved of his pain by either sleep or drugs. But it is not so in Hell. This luxury will be forever denied to the inmates of Hell. No one ever can sleep or rest in this gloomy prison.

Third, the inhabitants of Hell are in a place of punishment. In Hell men bear the punishment their sins deserves. Jesus said of the goat nations in Matthew 25:41 that they would "go away into everlasting punishment." II Thessalonians 1:9 speaks of some being "punished with everlasting destruction." An improved translation of II Peter 2:9 reads: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment." This last verse leaves no doubt that the wicked are even now under punishment, and other Scripture makes it plain they are awaiting a future punishment in GEHENNA.

Fourth, the inmates of Hell have undying memory. In Luke 16:25 Abraham said to the rich man: "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." People in Hell are forever remembering their sins. They will remember every sermon and song that they heard on earth.

They will remember every opportunity they had. Nothing will bring more oil to the flames of Hell than "Son, remember." I believe the undying memory is one of the chief torments in Hell. On earth sinners are called upon to remember their Creator, but they turn a deaf ear to this call. In Hell the misery of these same people will arise from a "Son, remember," to which they cannot turn a deaf ear.

How dreadful the sound of a gnawing, burning memory on the inside and unquenchable fire outside! No wonder there is no rest day nor night! No wonder it is said that their eyes weep, their tongues are almost dried with long wailings and outcries, their teeth gnashing with madness of thought. Nothing ever comes to relieve this piercing grief, nothing comes to divert or amuse this vexation of mind, nothing ever appears to soothe or ease this eternal pain in the head.

Fifth, those in Hell have raging desires which are never satisfied. In Luke 16 the rich man in Hell craved water. He could feel the sense of thirst. Thus the very raging appetites of men on earth will accompany them to Hell. The horror of Hell is that there is no possibility of gratifying these desires. There will be eternal hunger with no bread to relieve it; eternal thirst without a drop of water; eternal fatigue and weariness without power to sleep, and eternal lust without any hope of gratification. Today the drunkard cannot bear to pass the bar because of the crave for alcohol. In Hell he will crave this same booze without ever tasting a drop from the bottle. The drug addict and the adulterer will have all their bodily desires, yet they will never be gratified.

CONCLUSION

Hell is the center in which all the lines of sin and of misery meet. Infernal fire is neither tolerable nor terminable. Impenitent sinners in Hell shall have end without end, death without death, night without day, mourning without mirth, sorrow without solace, and bondage without liberty. The damned shall live as long in Hell as God Himself shall live in Heaven. Their imprisonment in the dark dungeon is not an imprisonment during the King's pleasure, but an imprisonment during the everlasting displeasure of the King of kings.

Friend, please consider this endless, endless state. There is not so much as one day of release from your awful pain. No change of weather or hope of clearing can be expected. There is nothing in Hell but a perpetual storm of fire and brimstone. Thus the greatest miseries of this life are incomparably less than the least torment in Hell. Never can you say that you are perfectly miserable till you land in the jaws of the second death!

'Separate State' ...

(Continued from Page Three)
it as I have explained it; of which hereafter.

Perhaps it is hard to determine, whether this superinduced "clothing," be like the Shechinah or visible glory, in which Christ, Moses, and Elias, appeared at the transfiguration, and which some suppose to have belonged to Adam in innocence; or whether it signify only "a state of happy immortality" superinduced or brought in upon the departing soul at death, or upon the soul and body united as in this life, and with which those saints shall be clothed, who "are found alive at the coming of Christ," according to I Corinthians 15:52, 53, 54 which will not kill the body, but swallow up its mortal state in immortal life.

Let this matter, I say, be determined either way, yet the great point seems to be evident even beyond probability, that there is a "conscious being" spoken of which is very distinct from its "tabernacle," or "house," or "clothing," and which exists still, whatever its clothing or its dwelling be, or whether it be put off or put on; and that when the earthly house or vessel is dissolved or put off, the heavenly house or clothing is ready at hand to be put on immediately to render the soul of the Christian fit to be "present with the Lord."

"I knew a man in Christ, above fourteen years ago, whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth; how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words" (II Cor. 12:2, 3). I grant this ecstasy of the apostle does not actually shew the existence of a Separate State after death till the resurrection; yet, it plainly manifests Paul's belief, that there might be such a state, and that the soul might be separated from the body, and might exist, and think, and know, and act in Paradise, in a state of separation, and hear, and perhaps converse in the unspeakable language of that world while it was "absent from the body."

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ated from the body, and might exist, and think, and know, and act in Paradise, in a state of separation, and hear, and perhaps converse in the unspeakable language of that world while it was "absent from the body."

And, as I acknowledge I am one of those persons who do not believe that the intellectual spirit or mind of man is the proper principle of animal life to the body, but that it is another distinct conscious being that generally uses the body as an habitation, engine, or instrument, while its animal life remains; so I am of opinion, it is a possible thing for the intellectual spirit, in a miraculous manner, by the special order of God, to act in a state of separation without the death of the animal body, since the life of the body depends upon breath and air, and the regular temper and motion of the solids and fluids, of which it is composed. And St. Paul seems here to be of the same mind, by his doubting whether his spirit was "in the body" or "out of the body," whilst it was "wrapt into the third Heaven" and enjoyed this vision, his body being yet alive.

"For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21). The apostle, whilst he was here upon earth, spent his life in the service of Christ, and enjoyed many glorious communications from Him. "For him to live was Christ." And on this account he was contented to continue here in life longer: yet he is well satisfied that "death would be" an advantage or "gain to him." Now we can hardly suppose what gain it could be for Paul to die, if his soul immediately went to sleep, and became inactive and unconscious, while his body lay in

the grave, and neither soul nor body could do any service for Christ, nor receive any communications from Him, till the great rising-day. This text seems to carry the argument above a mere probability.

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (I Thess. 4:14). The most natural and evident sense of these words is this, that when the man Jesus Christ (in whom dwells the fulness of the Godhead) shall descend from Heaven, in order to raise the dead bodies of those that died or went to sleep in the faith of Christ, God dwelling in him, will bring with Him the souls of His saints who were in Paradise, down to earth, to be reunited to their bodies when Jesus raises them from the dead, of which the apostle speaks in the 6th verse: this, I say, is the most natural and obvious sense; other paraphrases of the words seem strained and unnatural.

"Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him" (I Thess. 5:10). Sleep is the death of good men, in the language of the apostle, in chapter 4:13,14,15, and "sleep" in this verse, can neither signify "natural sleep," as verse 7 nor "spiritual slough," as verse 6, therefore it must signify "death" here. Now, they who sleep in Christ, in this sense, do still "live together with Him" in their souls, and shall live with Him in their bodies also, when raised from the dead. This exposition arises near to a certainty of evidence.

"Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit; by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient, when (Continued on page 5, column 2)

Halliman ... Report

(Continued from page one)
His leadership and you cannot go wrong.

Beloved, in my next article I will set forth my plans to soon return to the mission field. Even now, as I contemplate going, I am doing so with new courage as I face some of the greatest potentials in this new area of the Huli people, that I have had since being in Papua New Guinea.

As you well realize we are living in a day when most people seemingly like to retire early, and if that is what folk want I have no qualms about that. However, I would be most grateful if so many folk would quit trying to retire me. Beloved, I see no place for retirement for a Baptist preacher so long as his health is good. One pastor recently said to me, quote: "Brother Halliman, the thing that amazes and encourages me most about you and the New Guinea mission work, is the fact that at your age most people want to retire and you are not only still going strong, but laying plans to launch out into possibly the greatest work and years of your life," unquote.

Beloved, I know not what the future holds for either me or the work in New Guinea, but up to this date God has given us about 7,000 souls and 43 Baptist churches there in the past nearly 20 years, and by His grace we plan to continue on until He says it is enough. We would ask of you to hold up our hands so that we may be steady until sundown, Exodus 17:12. May God bless you.

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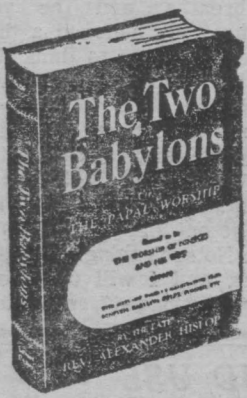
(Continued from Page One)
God uses his unreasonableness to effect a great purpose. By this means, in the satisfaction given to Thomas, we have the fact of the resurrection established on evidence beyond all suspicion. The possibility of delusion is removed; and the reality that it was Jesus whom the apostles saw, rests not merely on the testimony of their eyes, but of the hands of the most unreasonable unbeliever that ever was in the world. Of all the infidels that ever existed, Thomas was the most extravagant. Voltaire and Hume are men of moderation compared to this prince of infidels. Nothing will satisfy this philosopher but the handling of the prints of the nails in his Master. Was it not possible that the risen body of Jesus should have had no scars? Was not this the most likely thing to be expected? That Almighty power which could raise Him, could raise Him without a mark of His crucifixion. But Thomas was in all respects unreasonable; that through this, Jesus might exhibit Himself with evidence of His resurrection, that the most extravagant incredulity could presume to demand.

By this providential fact the Lord teaches us that His own disciples believe in Him, not because they are naturally more teachable or less incredulous than others. It is God only who overcomes their unbelief. They are not only by nature the children of wrath even as others; but after they are brought to faith and life, the only security of the perseverance is the favour and love of God in Christ. They are kept by faith, and that faith is not of themselves, but is the gift of God. The strongest of all the disciples of Christ would not abide in the faith for a single day, if, like Peter or like Thomas, they were to be given up to their own unbelief. But if the strongest would not stand in their strength the feeblest will not be plucked from the hand of the heavenly Father. After the fearful example of Peter and of Thomas, let no disciple of Christ trust in his own steadfastness. We are strong only when, seeing our own

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weakness, we have strength in the Rock of our salvation.

The world in general and philosophers in particular look upon Christians as a weak-minded people, who are prone to believe without sufficient evidence. The man of science, even when he can find no fault with the man of God, still thinks himself justifiable in considering him as utterly below himself in mental powers. He thinks there must be a soft place in his head somewhere. The best that he can find to say is, that he is "an amiable enthusiast." The truth however, is far otherwise. Whether the believer is a man of strength (Continued on Page 6, Column 1)

'Separate State' ...

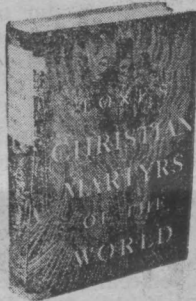
(Continued from page four)
once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah" (1 Pet. 3:18,19,20). I confess this is a text that has much puzzled interpreters, in what sense Christ may be said "to go and preach" to those ancient rebels who were destroyed by the flood; whether He did it by His Spirit working in Noah the "preacher of righteousness" in those days; or whether in the three days in which the body of Christ lay dead, His soul visited the spirit of those rebels in their separate state of imprisonment, on which some ground the notion of His descent into Hell; but, let this be determined as it will, the most clear and easy sense of the apostle, when he speaks of the "spirits in prison," is, that the souls of those rebels, after their bodies were destroyed by the flood, were reserved in prison for some special and future design: and this is very parallel to the present circumstances of fallen angels in Jude, verse 6. "The angels that kept not their first estate, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." And why may not the spirits of men be as well kept in such a prison as angelic spirits?

"Sodom and Gomorrah are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7.) It is evident that the material fire which destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah was not eternal, for a great lake of water quickly overflowed, and now covers all that plain where the fire was kindled, which burnt down those cities. It is manifest also, that the day of resurrection and future punishment being not yet come, they do not at this time suffer the vengeance of eternal fire in their bodies; nor can this verse, I think, be well explained to make Sodom and Gomorrah an example to deter present sinners from uncleanness, but by allowing that the spirits of those lewd persons are now suffering a degree of vengeance or punishment from the justice of God, which is compared to that fire whereby their cities and their bodies were burnt; and which vengeance, at the last great day, shall continue their punishment, and pronounce it eternal, or kindle material fire which shall never be quenched.

The last text I shall mention, is Revelation 4:9. "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were

slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held." I confess this is a book of visions, and this place, amongst others, might be explained as a mere vision of the apostle, if there were no other text which confirmed the doctrine of a Separate State; but since I think there are some solid proofs of it in other parts of the New Testament, I know not why this may not be explained, at least something nearer to the literal sense of it than those will allow who suppose the soul to sleep from death to the resurrect-

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ion. Why may not the spirits of the martyrs, which are now with God, pray Him to hasten the accomplishment of His promises made to His church, and the day of vengeance upon His irreconcilable enemies?

(THE WORLD TO COME, pp. 347-355, 1847 edition).

God Is Governing ...

(Continued from page one)
the Analogy of Faith. Now it is one of the established maxims of Scripture that where there is genuine repentance and reformation God will show mercy and stay His judgments. This is plainly stated in such places as Leviticus 26:40-42; 1 Kings 8:33-36, yet it is not formally expressed in every chapter or even book. When God's prophets were sent forth to announce judgments it was (except in extreme cases) with the proviso that the people threatened would be spared if they forsook their wickedness and returned to the paths of virtue. It was unnecessary to al-

ways STATE this because it was plainly revealed in the general rule.

Thus, when Jonah proclaimed the overthrow of Nineveh, though he specified not the means by which judgment could be arrested, yet they were understood; a reprieve would be granted if there were true repentance. Consequently, his proclamation was no heralding of God's inexorable fiat, but rather the sounding of an alarm which operated as a means of moral persuasion. Had Nineveh obstinately persisted in her sins, she would certainly have been promptly overthrown; but because she ceased from being a city where every form of wickedness ran riot and became a place where the name of God was feared and His authority respected, her doom was averted. Jonah was not disclosing the Divine decree, but rather spoke ethically, addressing himself to human responsibility. And when it is said that "God repented of the evil that He had said that He would do unto them," He designated to use a familiar form of speech: there was no change in His eternal purpose but an alteration in His BEARING toward them because their conduct had changed for the better.

That our explanation of Jonah 3:4-10 is no mere plausible attempt or subtle device of getting out of a tight place should be quite evident from Jeremiah 18:7-8: "At what instant I should speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom to pluck up and to pull down and destroy it. If that nation against whom I have pronounced (not 'decreed') turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them." Though the threat be genuine and the danger real, yet the announcement of judgment is not an absolute one, but qualified, and when the qualification is not expressed it is IMPLIED. The implied reserve that God will deal in mercy with those who genuinely put right that which displeases Him and will not destroy such, was perceived and appealed to by Abram when he said, "That be far from Thee to do after this manner: to slay the righteous with the wicked, and that the righteous should be as the wicked be far from Thee: that shall not the Judge of all the earth do right!" (Gen. 18:25).

Even though no particular notice be taken of other passages and attention be entirely confined unto

what is recorded in Jonah 3, will not the thoughtful reader be stuck by the very terms of the prophet's announcement: "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown?" Had the guilt of Nineveh been so great and her course in evil so long confirmed, why was any intimation of her destruction at all necessary? If her doom was fixed, if God had purposed her overthrow, then why send one of His prophets to declare the same? Further, why pronounce Nineveh's judgment almost six weeks before it should be executed? Ah, did not that very interval suggest that a door of hope stood open if her people humbled themselves and avail themselves of it? Was not that very interval an intimation of mercy in reserve? Was it not as much as though God said, "I gave her space to repent" (Rev. 2:27)? But if we compare Scripture with Scripture (and we are ever the losers by failing to do so) then the "FORTY DAYS" confirms the conclusion we have drawn, for forty is the number which expresses probation and testing: see Deuteronomy 8:2-4; Acts 7:30; Matthew 4:2; etc.

How what has been before us above exemplifies the wondrous patience and forbearance of God! How it demonstrates that His anger is not like ours—a violent passion which ebbs and flows—but rather the calm and deliberate expression of His insulted holiness upon those who despise His authority and refuse to seek unto His mercy. God warns before He smites, expostulates before He punishes, gives ample time and opportunity for an escape from His judgments. Enoch and Noah preached for many years before the flood destroyed the world. Prophet after prophet was sent into Israel before God banished them into captivity. Almost forty years passed after the Jews crucified their Messiah ere Jerusalem was razed to the ground. Well nigh six thousand years have gone since the fall of our first parents, and yet human history has not closed. The Lord is "slow to anger," yet that slowness is neither indifference to evil nor slackness in dealing with the same; rather it is a proof that He "bears with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction."

Still another purpose is served by the slowness of God unto anger and the interval between a nation's degeneracy and the execution of Divine judgment upon it, and that is, it serves to test more completely human responsibility and make manifest how richly deserved is the retribution which overtakes evildoers. If God's slowness to anger evidences His forbearance, how the general response of men thereto displays the inveteracy of their wickedness. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil" (Eccl. 8:11). Because God keeps silence they imagine He is altogether such a one as themselves (Psa. 50:21). "Let favor be shown to the wicked, yet will they not learn righteousness" (Isa. 26:10). Despising the riches of God's goodness and longsuffering, after hardness of his impenitent heart man treasures up unto himself wrath against the day of wrath (Rom. 2:4, 5). And thus it is made apparent that he is "without excuse" and that his "damnation is just."

STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. 22, June 1943).

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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
SEPTEMBER 9, 1979
PAGE FIVE

The Risen Christ And

(Continued from page five)

of intellect, or feeble in mind, he would be equally an unbeliever with the most talented of his enemies, were he left to himself. Yea, the weakest would likely be the most presumptuous and rash, and blasphemous in the extravagance of their complaints against the Gospel. Thomas would not be behind Paine in the rashness of his demands and assertions. The Christian is made a little child by the Word and Spirit of God, but by nature he receiveth not the things of the Spirit, for they are to him, as well as to others, foolishness, until his eyes are opened to discover them.

It is a matter of fact, worthy of particular attention, that the simplest of the men of God make a more correct and more scientific estimate of the philosopher, than the philosopher can make of him. The philosopher, with all his knowledge, knows not God by his philosophy. He knows not, then, the correct and enlightened views of the man of God on the highest of all sciences. The philosopher, not appreciating the value of the soul, nor the amount of the unspeakable glory of the heavenly inheritance, as well as of the danger of overlooking condemnation, sees not the wisdom of the conduct of the man of God. He has no way to judge of him but by himself; and, therefore as he himself is wise, the other must be a fool. The pleasure of knowledge, and the glory of fame are, with the philosopher, the very essence of the happiness of the third heavens. In all this, the man of God, even the weakest of them, can enter into the feelings and sentiments of the men of science: for, by nature, he is such a one himself. And he still finds, in his very best moments, that if he should lose sight of Heaven, and be left of God, he would make his paradise with the philosophers, or, at least, according to his taste, with some group of those who are, in different ways, in pursuit of earthly joys.

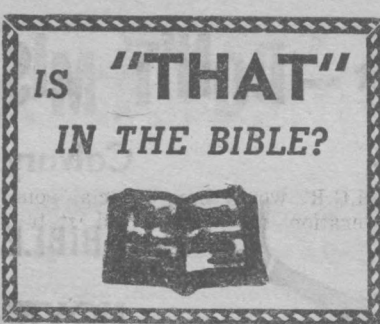
The Christian is not amazed that men seek the praise of man more than that of God; and that they pursue the things of this world rather than the things of God. He is rather amazed that God has turned himself out of this course, and enables him to resist the temptations which he daily meets in the world. To him there is no mystery in the character and choice of the philosopher, of the sensualist, of the men of the world. In them he sees himself as he is by nature. It is with new eyes that he sees spiritual things in a correct manner. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man" (I Cor. 2:14-15). The Christian is the true philosopher. He not only has knowledge of the most sublime of all the sciences, of which, the wise men of this world are as destitute as the wild ass of the wilderness, but he has that discernment

of human views and character which human wisdom never has attained. The Christian knows the philosopher better than the philosopher knows himself. Of all the sciences, the science of mind is the most sublime; and Christians have a knowledge of the mind of man which no mere philosopher can obtain by his art. The philosopher gives an account of himself and of others, and of his own notions and views, which every Christian can detect as delusive and unreal.

In this providential fact we see the forbearance and condescension of Christ to His people, even when they are unreasonable. He graciously removes the doubts of Thomas, though He might justly have left him to perish in his presumptuous unbelief. From this we may be assured that, in one way or another, the Lord will remove the doubts of His people with respect to the evidence of the Gospel. He will not give them that evidence which extravagance may rashly demand. He will keep them from such extravagance, or remove their doubts by opening their eyes to understand the proper evidence. This will be the same thing with presenting to their view and to their touch His hands and His side. He will assuredly overcome the unbelief and hardness of heart of the most obstinate of His chosen ones.

If He was not provoked to give up Thomas, His patience cannot meet with a more extravagant case of incredulity. He could call Saul of Tarsus in the midst of his furious enmity to Him, and He did overcome the unbelief of the incredulous and obstinate Thomas. What a consolation is this for the believer! What thoughts of unbelief arise in the heart! And how Satan could perplex the mind of the highest saint on earth, none but the believer can have any conception. If we were for a few minutes, from a state of the most assured faith, to be given into the hands of Satan to sift us as wheat, how would our faith fail us! Who knows what effect the fiery darts of the wicked one would have upon our minds, if they were not quenched? And quenched they cannot be but on the shield of faith: and in the case supposed God permits that faith to fail. What, then, will support us? How shall we without dismay look into an eternal world? But though God may for a moment suffer us to be tried by the tempter He will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but will with the temptation make a way of escape, that we may be able to bear it. Our constant prayer to God ought to be, that He would not give us into the hands of Satan, or that He will continue to give us the shield of faith.

In matters of so great moment, the mind, particularly at death, naturally looks for and wishes every evidence of the Truth, and sometimes demands unreasonable evidence. Nothing but the blood of Jesus should be before our eyes; and we should always remember that we glorify God, not by doubting, but by believing His Word. Were not Christ present with His people in the time of their trial, and especially at the time of their death, nothing could deliver them



Question:—

HOW MANY CENTURIES DID THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL WORSHIP THE BRASS SERPENT WHICH MOSES MADE?

Answer:—At least five centuries, for Moses can hardly be dated later than the thirteenth century B.C., and Hezekiah lived in the late eighth and early seventh centuries B.C. Of the latter, we read in Second Kings 18:4: "He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan." (Margin, "i.e., a piece of brass.")

from horror. That they are not only saved from fear, but enabled to rejoice and triumph in death, is the surest evidence that the Gospel is true. It is not surprising that persons ignorant of the character of God, of their own character, and of the consequences of sin, should be stupidly unconcerned at death. But the Christian knows too much to be kept from the very agonies of Hell if he has not the life of Heaven, when he passes through the dark valley and shadow of death. In the removal of the doubts of reason, let us gain confidence that the Lord will not forsake us in the time of our need. To a Christian, who is deeply acquainted with his own weakness, Hell itself is not a greater object of horror, than to be given up without assistance from God, to wrestle with the prince of this world at the hour of death.

It is remarkable that the Lord, though He complied with the unreasonable demand for evidence in the case of Thomas, yet He would not listen to the request of the rich man in Hell, for the conviction of his relations on earth. "Then he said, I pray thee, therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them lest they also come into this place of torment" (Luke 16). Did Abraham yield to the proposal, and admire the plan? No. "Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, Father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." Our sceptics are still calling for more or better evidence. If the Gospel is true, they allege it should have evidence against which no man could find objection. Let them alone. Press on them the evidence that God has given of the truth of His Gospel. If they believe not this, it will be found, in the day of judgment, that they have not rejected to from its own insufficiency, but from their own enmity to the Truth. Testimony is a sufficient ground of evidence; and if they reject the testimony of God by His apostles, they will justly perish.

And the same thing will hold true with respect to the denial of the testimony of God with regard to any particular doctrine or part thereof. The enemies of the doctrine, or fact recorded, will allege a want of proof; and, on the authority of philosophical doctrines, will take on them to modify the testimony of God. They make the dogmas of human science an authority paramount to the testimony of God in the Scriptures. This is the boldness, the blasphemy of infidelity. If God has given His testimony on any part, it is evidence paramount in authority to every other. To prove the truth alleged on such authority, nothing

is necessary but to show that it is the result of the fair exposition of the laws of language. Let God be true, and let all men be liars. Against the testimony of God the philosopher is not to be heard more than a convicted perjurer. Our Lord, even though, for His own wise purposes, He indulged Thomas, yet did not approve of his unbelief, nor of his demand. He did not ascribe his incredulity to greater talents or greater caution, or greater concern about the Truth, than were discovered by his brethren. On the contrary, He shows that they rather are blessed who will believe without such evidence as Thomas demanded. There are two extremes, equally to be avoided, into which men are prone to fall. Some believe without evidence, believe against all evidence, believe what all evidence, capable of being submitted to the mind of men, shows to be absurd and impossible. On the other hand, there are some unreasonably refuse evidence that is sufficient, evidence which God has pronounced sufficient, and look on themselves as manifesting greater intellect or greater wisdom in demanding evidence of another kind which God has not appointed. "Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, yet have believed."

(STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. XXII, No. 6, pp. 133-136, June 1943).

The Bible

(Continued from page one)

say, "Did you read my Bible?" "NO." "I wrote you a letter of mercy; did you read it?" "NO." "Rebel! I have sent thee a letter inviting thee to me; didst thou ever read it?" "LORD, I NEVER BROKE THE SEAL; I KEPT IT SHUT UP." "Wretch!" says God, "then, thou deservest Hell, if I sent thee a loving epistle, and thou wouldest not even break the seal; what shall I do unto thee?" Oh, let it not be so with you. Be Bible readers; be Bible searchers.

II. Our second point is: THE SUBJECTS ON WHICH THE BIBLE TREATS. The words of the text are these: "I have written to him the great things of my law." The Bible treats of great things, and of great things only. There is nothing in this Bible which is unimportant. Every verse in it has a solemn meaning; and if we have not found it out yet, we hope yet to do it. You have seen mummies, wrapped around and round with folds of linen. Well, God's Bible is like that; it is a vast roll of white linen, woven in the loom of truth; so you will have to continue unwinding it, roll after roll, before you get the real meaning of it from the very depth; and depth; and, when you have found, as you think, a part of the meaning, you will still need to keep on unwinding, unwinding, and all eternity you will be unwinding the words of this wondrous volume. Yet there is nothing in the Bible but great things. Let me divide, so as to be

more brief. First, all things in this Bible are great; but, secondly, some things are the greatest of all.

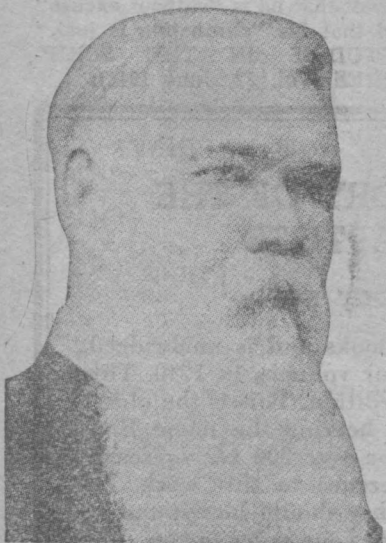
ALL THINGS IN THE BIBLE ARE GREAT. Some people think it does not matter what doctrines you believe; that it is immaterial what church you attend; that all denominations are alike. Well, I dislike Mrs. Bigotry above almost all people in the world, and I never give her any compliment or praise, but there is another woman I hate equally as much, and that is Mrs. Latitudinarianism—a well known character, who has made the discovery that all of us are alike. Now, I believe that a man may be saved in any church. Some have been saved in the Church of Rome—a few blessed men whose names I could mention here. I know, blessed be God, that multitudes are saved in the Church of England: she has a host of pious, praying men in her midst. I think that all sections of Protestant Christians have a remnant according to the election of grace; and they had need to have, some of them, a little salt, for otherwise they would go to corruption.

But when I say that, do you imagine that I think them all on a level? Are they all alike truthful? One sect says infant baptism is right; another says it is wrong; yet you say they are both right. I cannot see that. One teaches we are saved by free grace; another says that we are not, but are saved by free will; and yet you believe they are both right. I do not understand that. One says that God loves His people, and never leaves off loving them; another says that He did not love His people before they loved Him—that He often loves them, and then ceases to love them, and turns them away. They may be both right in the main; but can they both be right when one says "Yes," and the other says "No?" I must have a pair of spectacles, to enable me to look backwards and forwards at the same time, before I can see that. It cannot be, sirs, that they are both right.

But some say they differ upon non-essentials. This text says, "I have written to him the GREAT things of my law." There is nothing in God's Bible which is not great. Did ever any of you sit down to see which was the purest religion? "Oh," say you, "we never took the trouble. We went just where our father and mother went." Ah! that is a profound reason indeed. You went where your father and mother did. I thought you were sensible people; I didn't think you went where other people pulled you, but went of your own selves. I love my parents above all that breathe, and the very thought that they believed a thing to be true, helps me to think it is correct; but I have not followed them; I belong to a different denomination, and I thank God I do. I can receive them as Christian brethren and sisters; but I never thought that, because they happened to be one thing, I was to be the same. No such thing. God gave me brains, and I will use them; (Continued on page 7, column 4)

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"WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD TODAY?"

NEW YORK (EP) — "Imagine the public outcry if 127 boat people managed to survive the perils of the sea only to be picked up and flown back to Vietnam. Well, it happened," said Antoine Adrien, "but not to the Indochinese boat people. It happened to Haitian refugees. And there was no public outcry to speak of."

Adrien, who works at the Haitian Refugee Center sponsored by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn, reported that 127 Haitians, crowded into a 44-foot boat, reached Miami, June 8. By June 10, all of them were flown back to Haiti by U.S. immigration authorities.

Adrien, who is co-chairman with Paul Lehmann of the Rescue Committee for Haitian Refugees, condemned the American action as a "flagrant violation of legal and moral obligations under the international refugee law, the Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees."

LA HABRA, Calif. (EP)—Thirty-three publishing houses participated in a Statistical Survey conducted for the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association by John P. Dessauer, Inc.

The report, recently made available to participants, showed net sales totaling over \$175 million compared with \$154 million in 1977. Largest dollar and unit gains among the ten product categories included in the survey were posted by Bible sales, but sales of training court materials, records and tapes also advanced significantly. Books showed modest dollar-gains overall, but declined in the unit column. Paperbound books lost ground in both dollars and units.

WASHINGTON (EP) — The U.S. State Department is pressing Czechoslovakia to allow consular officers to speak to three Americans arrested July 3 for allegedly smuggling Bibles into the country.

The three — Lenore Hunt, 23, Albion Buckingham, 26, and Michael Birks, 21, are affiliated with the Summer Youth Training in Europe program of the Slavic Gospel Association, an evangelical agency based in Wheaton, Ill. Czech officials said they had not declared \$1,000 worth of Bibles, and indicated that a charge of unlicensed importation of literature is pending against the Americans.

WATERVILLE, Maine (EP) — The local school here declined to take action on an Adventist minister's request that a course on "mysteries and the supernatural" be dropped from the junior high school curriculum.

Lee Welkey, pastor of the Blessed Hope Advent Christian Church, objected to the elective mini-course on the grounds that exposing youngsters to the occult is unwise. "We're living in a day when there is a lot of renewed interest in the occult," the minister said, "and I feel that to whet an appetite on the junior high level is un-

necessary and unhealthy."

The school board turned down the minister's petition primarily on grounds that removal of the course might be "intense censorship."

WASHINGTON (EP) — Three-fourths of the inmates in Lorton Reformatory, the District of Columbia's prison in Fairfax County, Va., have embraced either Christianity or Islam in the past three years, according to the Washington Post.

"From one end of the . . . prison complex to the other, prisoners can be found praying, singing gospel songs, holding Bibles or Korans, and greeting each other with 'praise the Lord' or 'as-sasalaan-al-aikum,'" said reporter Joseph D. Whitaker.

The article, which appeared in the August 2 edition of the Post, said that since the religious revival began, escapes from Lorton have dropped to zero and assaults of other prisoners and guards have been significantly reduced.

"There is no question that we are better able to control the institution now that so many inmates are involved in religious activities," D. C. director of corrections Delbert Jackson told the Post. "But we are still operating a prison, and as far as I'm concerned the trend toward religion could reverse at any time."

Some prison officials and inmates are reportedly skeptical of the conversions of many Lorton residents. The Post quoted Eddie Lester Smith, serving a life plus 53-year sentence, as saying: "What the people on the outside see is a lot of Lorton inmates who seem to be interested in religion. Inside, we know that a lot of inmates get involved with a religious group to keep from being sexually harassed or to possibly plan a way to get out of prison."

On August 5, 1979, Prime Minister Francesco Cossigan, a Christian Democrat, and his three-party coalition Government were sworn into office. Cossigan is the fourth politician in a month to try to form Italy's 42nd government since World War II. His coalition of Christian Democrats, Social Democrats, and Liberals will have a total of 291 seats in the Chamber of Deputies, 25 short of a majority. The Communists have 201 seats in the Chamber. Here is further proof that Roman Catholicism breeds Communism, for Italy is predominantly Roman Catholic.

Christians are organizing to fight a congressional move to grant special privileges to what one congressman called an "endangered species": homosexuals. The pro-homosexual "National Gay Rights Bill" introduced in the House (H. R. 2074) is being countered by H.C.R. 166.

Backing H.C.R. 166 is "Christian Voice," an organization of 100,000 members, including 1,500 ministers. Robert Grant, the organization's

policy spokesman, calls H.C.R. 166 the beginning of a national campaign to oppose "head on" the National Gay Rights Bill, which is co-sponsored by 45 House members.

H.C.R. would bar "special consideration or a protected status under law" for homosexuals. It is supported by 11 members of the House and four senators.

Homosexuals have become increasingly forceful in trying to obtain official legitimacy for their conduct and a privileged status under law. Should H. R. 2074 become law, businessmen and school principals would be subject to stiff penalties for refusing to hire people who flaunt their sexual perversions.

—SPOTLIGHT 8-20-79

Truth is stranger than fiction! The United States has recognized the unelected, Communist, military rulers of Nicaragua. On the other hand, the Carter Administration has withheld recognition of the freely elected anti-Communist government in Rhodesia. Our State Department is considering arming the Scandinavians.

Miss Anita Bryant is well-known for her stand against homosexuality. Her 10-year contract with the Florida Citrus Commission was due to expire in August, but the commissioners unanimously extended the entertainer's contract for one year with pay of \$100,000.

There is another ruthless tyrant ruling in Africa, murdering and oppressing his own people. His name is Emperor Bokassa I of the Central African Empire. He is most recently charged with the massacre of about 100 schoolboys, some only 8 years old, because they refused to buy school uniforms from a shop owned by one of Bokassa's wives.

The children were arrested, jailed, beaten, and shot to death. Amnesty International reported this horror some weeks ago. An investigating team with representatives from the Ivory Coast, Senegal, Togo, Liberia and Rwanda checked out the allegations. This team has now concluded that the Amnesty International charges are true.

Although this is a well-known fact, there has not been a whimper heard from President Jimmy Carter, Andy Young, Jane Fonda, or any liberal leader in this country.

At the same time I am reading this report I have just read about Elder Jesse L. Jackson march through South Africa in the name of civil rights. This 37-year-old black Baptist preacher branded the white dominated government as a "terrorist dictatorship." He even compared South Africa's racial policy to "the ungodly acts of Hitler," and he urged blacks to practice civil disobedience in the style of Martin Luther King, Jr.

If Elder Jackson is sincere in his campaign for civil rights, I suggest that he pay a visit to the Central African Empire. He can go there and tell the people about the terrorist dictatorship who murdered 100 schoolboys, some only 8 years old. If he would do this, then all concerned would know he really does believe in civil rights for all people.

A Jesuit priest-historian, Robert M. Senkewicz, suggests that the phrase "under God" ought to be dropped from the Pledge of Allegiance. This history teacher at the University of Santa Clara says that when President Eisenhower signed a bill calling for the insertion 25 years ago, most politicians saw the phrase as a way to contrast God-aligned America with atheistic Communist nations.

We are used to hearing this suggestion from atheists, but we are shocked to hear it from a person who professes to be Christian. I believe the addition of "under God" was a wise move by President Eisenhower. He said at that time: "From this day forward, millions of our schoolchildren will daily proclaim in every city and town, every village and rural schoolhouse, the dedication of our people to the Almighty . . . Nothing could be more inspiring than to contemplate this re-dedication of our youth each school morning to our country's true meaning."

The Bible

(Continued from page six)

and if you have any intellect, use it, too. Never say it doesn't matter. Whatever God has put here is of eminent importance: He would not have written a thing that was in-different. Whatever is here is of some value; therefore, search all questions, try all by the Word of God. I am not afraid to have what I preach tried by this book. Only give me a fair field and no favor, and this book; if I say anything contrary to it, I will withdraw it the next Sabbath-day. By this I stand, by this I fall. Search and see; but don't say, "it doesn't matter." If God says a thing, it always must be of importance.

But, while all things in God's Word are important, ALL ARE NOT EQUALLY IMPORTANT. There are certain fundamental and vital truths which must be believed, or otherwise no man would be saved. If you want to know what you must believe, if ye would be saved, you will find the great things of God's law between these two covers; they are all contained here. As a sort of digest or summary of the great things of law, I remember an old friend of mine once saying, "Ah! you preach the three R's, and God will always bless you." I said, "What are the three R's?" and he answered, "Ruin, redemption, and regeneration." They contain the sum and substance of divinity. R, for ruin. We were all ruined in the fall; we were all lost when Adam sinned, and we are all ruined by our own transgressions; we are all ruined by our own evil hearts, and our own wicked wills; and we all shall be ruined, unless grace saves us. Then there is a second R, for redemption. We are ransomed by the blood of Christ a lamb without blemish and without spot; we are rescued by His power; we are ransomed by His merits; we are redeemed by His strength. Then there is R, for regeneration. If we would be pardoned, we must also be regenerated; for no man can partake of redemption unless he is regenerate. Let him be as good as he pleases; let him serve God, as he imagines, as much as he likes; unless he is regenerate, and has a new heart, a new birth, he will still be in the first R, that is ruin.

These things contain an epitome of the gospel. I believe there is a better epitome in the five points of Calvinism:—Election according to the foreknowledge of God; the natural depravity and sinfulness of man; particular redemption by the blood of Christ; effectual calling by the power of the Spirit; and ultimate perseverance by the efforts of God's might. I think all those need to be believed, in order to salvation; but I should not like to write a creed like the Athanasian, beginning with "Whosoever shall be saved, before all things it is necessary that he should hold the Catholic faith which faith is this,"—when I got so far, I should stop, because I should not know what to write. I hold the catholic faith of the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible. It is not for me to draw up creeds; but I ask you to search the Scriptures, for this is the word of life.

God says, "I have written to him the great thing of my law." Do you doubt their greatness? Do ye think they are not worth your attention? Reflect a moment, man. Where art thou standing now?

"Lo, on a narrow neck of land, Twixt two unbounded seas I stand; An inch of time, a moment's space, May lodge me in yon heavenly place, Or shut me up in Hell."

I recollect standing on a seashore once, upon a narrow neck of land, thoughtless that the tide might come up. The tide kept continually washing up on either side, and, wrapped in thoughts, I still stood there, until at last there was the greatest difficulty in getting on shore. You and I stand each day on a narrow neck, and there is one wave coming up there; see, how near it is to your foot; and lo! another follows at every tick of the clock; "our hearts, like muffled drums, are beating funeral marches to the tomb." We are always tending downwards to the grave each moment that we live. THIS BOOK tells me that if I am converted, when I die I die, there

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is a heaven of joy and love to receive me; it tells me that angels' pinions shall be stretched, and I, borne by strong cherubic wings, shall out-soar the lightning, and mount beyond the stars, up to the throne of God, to dwell forever.

"Far from a world of grief and sin, With God eternally shut in."

Oh! it makes the hot tear start from my eye, it makes my heart too big for this body, and my brain whirl at the thought of "Jerusalem, my happy home, Name ever dear to me."

Oh! that sweet scene beyond the clouds; sweet fields arrayed in living green, and rivers of delight. Are not these great things? But then, poor unregenerate soul, the Bible says, if thou art lost, thou art lost forever; it tells thee that if thou diest without Christ, without God, there is no hope for thee; that there is no place without a gleam of hope, where thou shalt read, in burning letters, "Ye knew your duty, but ye did it not;" it tells you, that ye shall be driven from His presence with a "depart, ye cursed." Are not these great things? Yes, Sirs, as Heaven is desirable, as Hell is terrible, as time is short, as eternity is infinite, as the soul is precious, as pain is to be shunned, as Heaven is to be sought, as God is eternal, and as His words are sure, these are great things, things ye ought to listen to.

III. Our last point is: THE TREATMENT WHICH THE POOR BIBLE RECEIVES IN THIS WORLD; it is accounted a strange thing. What does that mean—the Bible accounted a strange thing? In the first place, it means that it is very strange to some people, because THEY NEVER READ IT. I remember reading, on one occasion, the sacred story of David and Goliath, and there was a person present, positively grown up to years of maturity, who said to me, "Dear me! what an interesting story; what book is that in?" And I recollected a person once coming to me in private; I spoke to her about her soul, she told me how deeply she felt, how she had a desire to serve God, but she found another law in her members. I turned to a passage in Romans, and read to her, "The good that I would I do not; and the evil which I would not that I do!" She said, "Is that in the Bible? I did not know it." I did not blame her, because (Continued on page 8, column 1)

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The Bible

(Continued from page 7)
she had no interest in the Bible till then; but I did wonder that there could be found persons who knew nothing about such a passage.

Ah! you know more about your ledgers than your Bible; you know more about your day-books than what God has written; many of you will read a novel from beginning to end, and what have you got? A mouthful of froth when you have done. But you cannot read the Bible; that solid, lasting, substantial, and satisfying food goes uneaten, locked up in the cupboard of neglect; while anything that man writes, a catch of the day, is greedily devoured. "I have written to him the great things of my law, BUT they were counted as a strange thing." Ye have never read it. I bring the broad charge against you. Perhaps, ye say, I ought not to charge you with any such thing. I always think it better to have a worse opinion of you than too good a one. I charge you with this: you do not read your Bibles. Some of you never have read it through. I know I speak what your heart must say is honest truth. You are not Bible readers. You say you have the Bible in your houses; do I think you are such heathens as not to have a Bible? But when did you read it last? How do you know that your spectacles, which you have lost,

have not been there for the last three years? Many people have not turned over its pages for a long time, and God might say unto them, "I have written unto you the great things of my law, but they have been accounted unto you a strange thing."

Others there be who read the Bible; but when they read it, THEY SAY IT IS SO HORRIBLY DRY. That young man over there says it is a "bore," that is the word he uses. He says, "My mother says to me, when you go up to town, read a chapter every day. Well, I thought I would please her, and said I would. I am sure I wish I had not. I did not read a chapter yesterday, or the day before. We were so busy, I could not help it." You do not love the Bible, do you? "No, there is nothing in it which is interesting." Ah, I thought so. But a little while ago I could not see anything in it. Do you know why? Blind men cannot see, can they? But when the Spirit touches the scales of the eyes, they fall off; and when He puts eye-salve on, then then the Bibles becomes precious.

I remember a minister who went to see an old lady, and he thought he would give her some precious promises out of the Word of God. Turning to one, he saw written in the margin "P" "P", and he asked, "What does this mean?" "That means precious," sir." Further down, he saw "T. and P.", and he asked what the

letters meant. "That," she said, "means tried and proved, for I have tried and proved it." If you have tried God's word and proved it—if it is precious to your soul, then you are Christians; but those persons who despise the Bible, have "neither part nor lot in the matter." If it is dry to you, you will be dry at last in Hell. If you do not esteem it as better than your necessary food; there is no hope for you; for you lack the greatest evidence of your Christianity.

Alas! Alas! the worst case is to come. THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE WHO HATE THE BIBLE, as well as despise it. Is there such an one stepped in here? Some of you said, "Let us go and hear what the young preacher has to say to us." This is what he has to say to you: "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish." This is what he hath to say to you: "The wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all that forget God." And this, again He has to say to you: "Behold, there shall come in the last days, mockers, like yourselves, walking after your own lusts." But more: He tells you tonight that if you are saved, you must find salvation here. Therefore, despise not the Bible; but search it, read it, and come unto it. Rest thee well assured, O scorner, that thy laughs cannot alter truth, thy jests cannot avert thine inevitable doom. Though in thy hardihood thou shouldst make a league with death, and sign a covenant with Hell—yet swift justice shall o'er-take thee, and strong vengeance strike thee low. In vain dost thou jeer and mock, for eternal verities are mightier than thy sophistries, nor can thy smart sayings alter the divine truth of a single word of this volume or Revelation. Oh why dost thou quarrel with thy best friend, and ill-treat thy only refuge? There yet remains hope, even for the scorner. Hope in a Saviour's veins. Hope in the Father's mercy. Hope in the Holy Spirit's omnipotent potent agency.

I have done when I have said one word. My friend, the philosopher, says it may be very well for me to urge people to read the Bible; but he thinks there are a great many sciences far more interesting and useful than theology. EXTREMELY OBLIGED TO YOU FOR YOUR OPINION, SIR. What science do you mean? The science of dissecting beetles and arranging butterflies? "No," you say, "certainly not." The science, then, of arranging stones, and telling us of the strata of the earth? "No, not exactly that." Which science, then? "Oh, all sciences," say you, "are better than the science of the Bible."

Ah! sir, that is your opinion; and it is because you are far from God, that you say so. But the science of Jesus Christ is the most excellent of sciences. Let no one turn away from the Bible because it is not a book of learning and wisdom. It is. Would ye know astronomy? It is here: it tells you of the Sun of Righteousness and the Star of Bethlehem. Would you know botany? It is here: it tells you of the plant of reknown—the Lily of the Valley, and the Rose of Sharon. Would you know geology and mineralogy? You shall learn it here: for you may read of the Rock of Ages, and the White Stone with the name engraven thereon, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. Would ye study history? Here is the most ancient of all the records of the history of the human race. Whate'er your science is, come and bend o'er this book; your science is here. Come and drink out of this fair fount of knowledge and wisdom, and ye shall find yourselves made wise unto salvation. Wise and foolish, babies and men, gray-headed sires, youths and maidens—I speak to you, I plead with you, I beg of you, respect your Bibles, and search them out, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and these are they which testify of Christ.

I have done. Let us go home and practice what we have heard. I have heard of a woman, who, when she was asked what she re-

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